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FM AMEMBASSY YEREVAN  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6183  
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0060  
RUEHSI/AMEMBASSY TBILISI IMMEDIATE 2224

UNCLAS YEREVAN 001056

SIPDIS

INFO CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

SENSITIVE  
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MOSCOW FOR USDA/KIM SVEC

E.O. 129581: N/A

TAGS: [EAGR](#) [EAID](#) [SENV](#) [TBIO](#) [KFLU](#) [AM](#)

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON SUSPECTED AFRICAN SWINE FEVER OUTBREAK IN  
ARMENIA

REF: YEREVAN 1051

[1](#)1.

1.(U) The following is an update of the suspected African Swine Fever (ASF) outbreak described Friday in reftel. Though the virus is widely believed to be ASF, it has not/not yet been officially confirmed as such.

[1](#)2. (U) Approximately three weeks ago the first cases of suspected ASF in Northeastern Armenia were observed in Parzlich village near Dilijan City, Tavush District at a large private swine farm. As of Saturday, August 25, all 409 pigs at that farm had been slaughtered after numerous unsuccessful efforts to save the population. This farm has been closed and quarantined. Armenian veterinarians who were brought in an attempt to save the pig population suspect (but have not confirmed) that the cause was contaminated feed.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Suspected ASF cases have more recently been reported in Vahagny, Pambak, Vahagnadzor and Dsekh villages - all in Lori District, near the Georgian border. As of Monday, August 27, no new reports of ASF have been reported in these four villages. A quarantine and slaughter regime was implemented there (USDA Armenia has photographs of this regime). This morning Barekamavan village (in Tuvush District, in northeastern Armenia, on the Georgian border) called in a possible ASF case.

[1](#)4. (U) The local population has little incentive to report suspected ASF cases; such reporting would result in the destruction of their entire swine population and at this time there is no compensation plan in place. The GOAM suspects farmers are hiding possible ASF events as a result.

[1](#)5. (U) A team of three Russian scientists arrived in Armenia over the weekend at the request of Minister of Agriculture David Lokyan. They are inspecting farms and have indicated they believe it is ASF. They have done preliminary testing. The Russian scientists are from: OIE in Vladimir, Russia; the Director of Virology and Microbiology Research Institute, Pokrov, Russia; and the manager of a laboratory in Pokrov, Russia. Russia paid for this trip as government-to-government collaboration at the request/invitation of the GOAM.

[1](#)6. (U) Four samples taken from stricken animals will be sent to Russia and to Pirbright, London. It is hoped the samples will leave today; UN/FAO is sending them via DHL. Pirbright previously sent approved virus shipping containers to Armenia. The samples will take 2-3 business to arrive at Pirbright, and results should be ready

within 24 hours of arrival.

17. (U) (Comment). It appears that, contrary to concerns outlined in reftel, the GOAM is now implementing a serious containment and slaughter regime, therefore applying some of the lessons learned from the A.I. technical assistance. Much of the current flurry of pro-active, positive activity can be attributed to the return to Armenia of a veterinarian from the Central Veterinary Laboratory. It also appears that rather than seek assistance from the Government of Georgia (as post had recommended in reftel), the GOAM has appealed directly to the Russian government.

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